

Personal Statement

"Hey guys, if you let me drive I'll pay for ice cream!" Despite this very generous offer, my friends are hesitant to even answer and clutch their car keys tighter. Okay, so what? I'm blind and it might be highly illegal for me to drive. But, there is still a slim chance I won't crash the car, so why not let me try? You see, being blind isn't difficult. However, learning how to successfully navigate a sighted world is truly my greatest challenge.

A car is a perfect example of this challenge. Driving would provide flexibility and convenience. It is a huge part of daily life especially in a vast place like New Mexico. I assume that if you are reading this, you are sighted, you recognize the importance of a car, and you might not be able to imagine life without one. Driving is only one of the many things people believe is nearly impossible for me to do and I find alternative ways to do them.

In school people are amazed that I can find my classes, keep up with reading, and complete my assignments. I admit the whiteboard is my worst enemy, but I have found other effective ways to learn. It has taken much communication and collaboration, mile-high stacks of printer paper, a computer, numerous flash drives, and loads of dedication. I've done it all. I expect nothing less than to be educated with the rest of my peers and to be treated no differently.

People have always told me not to let my visual impairment

define me, but I disagree. My blindness has made me who I am. It has taught me to seek creative solutions, to advocate for myself, to adapt to my environment, and overcome every obstacle. It has taught me patience with others and, more importantly, myself.

College is important to me because it will continue to sharpen my abilities and help me grow as a person. Education is paramount for my success. Let's face it, the military isn't going to hand me a gun. The state of New Mexico will never allow me to drive a fire truck or police car. So how about that ice cream? What do you say? I'll drive.